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Cont.

33. (Amended) A method as set forth in claim 32 where the step of acquiring the digital data call includes the step of acquiring the call ahead of the switch.

34. (Amended) A method as set forth in claim 32 where the step of acquiring the digital data call includes the step of acquiring the call ahead of a switching network.

35. (Amended) A method as set forth in claim 32 where the step of acquiring the digital data call includes the step of acquiring the call ahead of a switch interface module.

36. (Amended) A method as set forth in claim 32 where the step of acquiring the digital data call includes the step of acquiring the call at a basic rate interface, a remote line termination unit, a remote data terminal, or a subscriber line interface circuit.

37. (Amended) A method as set forth in claim 32 further comprising:
assigning a logical identifier to the digital data call; and
associating the call with the subscriber line.

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38. (Twice Amended) An apparatus for routing a digital data call to a destination, where the digital data call is received on a subscriber line connected to a termination unit communicating with a switch in a central office, comprising:

a termination unit, comprising means for acquiring the digital data call; and

a channel for routing the digital data call from the termination unit to the destination, where the channel is external to the switch.